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EDITORIALS.

—THOSE who hold place in our municipal government are necessarily “men of affairs,” and are very rarely possessed of the love of nature. Their idea of a tree is primarily based on its market value, but if it be necessarily ornamental by reason of its position, their idea of beauty consists in truncated branches with a coronæ of sprouts surrounding their extremities. Forest is in their view only attractive when it is cleared of smaller growth, and grass sown in its stead; and thickets of shrubs and vines are necessarily to be burned. Hills must be leveled, ravines must be filled up, and nature’s slopes must be replaced by dressed stone walls. At all this the lover of nature rebels for various reasons. Such interference with natural processes produces utter poverty, and wood and field are robbed of one of their charms, variety. In a park which receives such treatment, where ten species of trees grew, but one remains. From the hillsides the native shrubs have disappeared, and on the open, which was once a bed of flowers, there remains but the monotonous grass, reduced if possible to a single species. Such treatment destroys the haunts of bird and insect, and lays open the few venturesome wild things that remain, to the persecutions of the rabble, who would never otherwise know of their presence. It is important that this official vandalism should never enter our public parks, or that it should be speedily suppressed whenever it shows itself. Our parks are for the instruction of the public as well as for their relaxation. Stone walls and graded paths abound in the city, and mutilated trees line the streets. Let the parks be pictures of the great nature with its energies untrammelled and its processes in view of every citizen who wanders in their shades or repose on their banks. Let its forest teach the lesson of decay as well as of birth and life, and *abeste profanes*, hands off, of wonders that man cannot imitate or improve upon.

—VOGUE is a form of automatism, and it is natural to man, since it is always easier to imitate than to create. There are vogues in naming, vogues in studying, and some other kinds of vogues to which naturalists are liable, as vogues affect other men of other professions. We are moved to these reflections by the observation of the vogue which has been enjoyed for three quarters of a century by the alleged adjective *madagascariensis*. From *Daubentonia madagascariensis* to *Megaladapis madagascariensis*, a long procession of *madagascarienses*

has filed into place in our nomenclature, there to remain until time and language shall be no longer. To account for this phenomenon we cannot point viridically to the euphony of the word, nor to the great economy of time and space which we secure by adopting it. That suggestion and automatism have much to do with this custom there can be no doubt, but we venture a hypothesis which may relieve us of the painful suspicion that this ready yielding to ones subliminal self may be due to poverty of classical knowledge or inventive capacity, or both. The originator of the term foresaw the possibilities of the Malagassy language for cacaphony, so to avoid such terms as *antananarivoënsis*, and *amboulisatrensis*, he set the fashion at *madagascariensis*, and so it has remained. It is true that there are a few species of animals inhabiting the great island which are not named *madagascariensis*, but they must always remain in comparative obscurity. But it might be well to place the name on the retired list in view of its eminent services in the past, especially as there some new aspirants to public favor which will give it a competition too serious for its years. The cacophony mill which produces *Propalæhoplophorus* and *Brachydiastematomotherium* is still in motion, and we look for new revelations which will utterly destroy the usefulness of *madagascariensis* by placing it among the words of one syllable in the nomenclatorial primer.

—There is at present no law for the punishment of poachers in our National Parks. As a consequence the officers in charge can only escort men who are detected in this invasion of the rights of the public to the boundary, and there discharge them. As a consequence poaching has become rather a pleasant pasttime than otherwise. The recent detection of some men who have for several years been killing bison in the Yellowstone National Park, will perhaps stimulate Congress to remedy the evil. A bill is at present in the hands of the Committee on Territories of the House of Representatives which will if passed furnish the necessary legislation. We hope that nothing will prevent its early passage by both houses.

—We learn that the Sundry Civil Bill as sent to the House by the Committee on appropriations has not reduced the appropriations for the scientific work of Government bureaus below the amounts paid last year. We should be thankful for this in view of the extremely economic tendencies of the present congress.

—The legislature of Missouri is hesitating to make an appropriation for the continuance of the zoological survey. It will make a serious economic mistake if it fails to grant the usual sum.